

**THE PRESBYTERY OF THE MIAMI VALLEY
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY
POLICY AND PRACTICE**

(Note: Whenever the term “minister of the Word and Sacrament” is used in this Policy and Practice, it is deemed to be identical to the equivalent term “teaching elder” when that term is used in the Book of Order.)

**ARTICLE I
POLICY**

Section 1.01: General

The policies of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry represent the authority vested in it by the Presbytery of the Miami Valley. In carrying out such policies the Committee on Preparation for Ministry is acting as the presbytery in all measure and manner. All additions, deletions or changes to policy must be approved by the presbytery. No policy of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall be contrary to the provisions of the *Book of Order*.

Section 1.02: Function

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall execute the various functions necessary to carry out the mission and ministry of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley, in accordance with *Section 3.08* of the *PMV Policy and Practice*. Specifically, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall be the agency by which the presbytery becomes *Pastor, Counselor, and Advisor to Its Pastors and Congregations (G-3.0307)* with respect to *G-2.06 Preparation for Ministry, G-2.10 Commissioning Ruling Elders to Particular Pastoral Service, and G-2.1103 Certified Christian Educators*.

1. Specific functions of the committee with respect to *G-2.06 Preparation for Ministry* shall include:
 - a. Oversee the work, study and preparation for ordination of inquirers and candidates, and review and evaluate their performance.
 - b. Counsel with sessions regarding criteria for potential inquirers and candidates, the session's responsibilities for members who are inquirers or candidates, and the ongoing needs of the church for professional leadership.
 - c. Counsel with inquirers and candidates as to their responsibilities to communicate closely, openly and regularly with the committee, especially about specific needs and problems (spiritual, financial, educational, professional, vocational, etc.) some of which may require committee assistance or pastoral care.

- d. Conduct annual consultations with all inquirers and candidates and determine if each will be continued under care, reporting such action to the presbytery.
 - e. Counsel with, advise and evaluate persons wishing to become candidates regarding their potential for service to the church in a professional capacity.
 - f. Determine candidates' readiness to begin ordained ministry.
 - g. Assist the COM in determining that candidates from other presbyteries have met the same requirements for ordination that are required of candidates from the Presbytery of the Miami Valley.
 - h. Elect readers for ordination examinations.
2. Oversee the process for preparation, instruction, counseling and examinations for ruling elders seeking to serve in commissioned pastoral service, in accordance with *G-2.1002 Training, Examination and Commissioning*.
 3. Shepherd persons seeking Christian educator certification through the process of skills and training, in accordance with *G-2.1103a*.

Section 1.03: Committee Size (Revised 2/13/16)

Membership of the committee shall be nine (9) members, divided as evenly as possible between ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders, elected in three classes of three (3) persons, for terms of three years each, renewable for one term.

One member of the committee shall be chosen by the committee to serve a one-year renewable term on the Representation and Diversity Committee.

Section 1.04: Quorum

One more than one-half of the current voting members shall constitute a quorum. All proceedings from meetings with no quorum present must be ratified at the earliest subsequent meeting in which there is a quorum.

Section 1.05: Budget

The operating budget for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall be determined and approved by the Presbytery. As part of the budget process, the committee shall provide its funding request annually to the Presbytery Trustees.

Section 1.06: Authority to Act as Presbytery

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry may act as the Presbytery of the Miami Valley in the following matters:

1. Enrolling inquirers
2. Granting permission to candidates to circulate dossiers
3. Granting permission for the examination and ordination of a candidate in the presbytery of call [*Stated Clerk's note: This provision has been rendered unnecessary due to a revision in the Book of Order, G-2.0702, which says that the "presbytery placing the call to the candidate for ministry shall ordinarily examine, ordain, and install the candidate."*]

All actions taken on behalf of the presbytery by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall be reported at the next stated meeting of the presbytery.

Section 1.07: Communication and Access

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall be open to communication and access at all times to all persons within the presbytery.

Section 1.08: Staff Support

The Executive Presbyter shall serve as staff support without vote.

Section 1.09: Transferring Minister Membership from Another Denomination That Is Not in Full Communion with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (Added 2-9-19)

When it advances the mission and work of the Presbytery of Miami Valley, it may be appropriate to honor the request of a minister to transfer membership from another denomination to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ("PCUSA"). The following provisions apply if the requesting minister's denomination is neither in full communion with the PCUSA nor a member of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

1. When a minister requests a transfer, the Presbytery of the Miami Valley's Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) and the Committee on Ministry (COM) will be notified.
2. It is strongly encouraged that the minister be a temporary member of this presbytery for at least two years, approval for which will have included a reference check by the Executive Presbyter with the appropriate denominational official. This is an act of the Committee on Ministry. In addition, the minister ordinarily will have served at least five years in ordained ministry with the other denomination before being transferred to the PCUSA.
3. Immediately upon request for transfer, the CPM shall review the minister's academic credentials.
4. Consistent with the Book of Order (G-2.0505), CPM shall evaluate the competency of the minister's Reformed understanding of theology, polity,

worship and sacraments, and biblical exegesis. In doing so, CPM may engage individuals who are not members of CPM to assist in the evaluation.

- a. CPM will evaluate competency in biblical exegesis through a written examination consistent with previous exams offered by the denomination.
 - b. The minister will successfully complete a Presbyterian Polity course, either online or in person, following which CPM will examine the minister either orally or in writing, at CPM's discretion, in coordination with the minister.
 - c. CPM will evaluate competency in theology and in worship and sacraments through an examination, either oral or written, at CPM's discretion, in coordination with the minister.
 - d. If CPM's evaluation of any of these competency areas is unsatisfactory, the minister will be expected to pass the ordination examination in that area offered by the PCUSA denomination.
5. The minister shall submit a written statement of faith, a personal statement on his/her sense of call, and a detailed written description of the minister's motivation and expectations for seeking to transfer membership to the PCUSA.
 6. Before approving a transfer, CPM shall request a comprehensive background check as outlined in the Presbytery of the Miami Valley Committee on Ministry Policy and Practice section 1.22, and the Executive Presbyter shall conduct a final reference check from the minister's denomination of membership. If any issues are raised that were not already disclosed, the minister will be asked to address those with the appropriate committee (CPM or COM).
 7. With the concurrence of COM, the CPM will approve a minister to be examined for transfer on the floor of presbytery. COM's concurrence is necessary to confirm that the individual's membership in the presbytery advances the presbytery's mission, life, and work. The presbytery vote will require approval by at least three-quarters of presbyters voting (G-2.0610).
 8. Following presbytery approval and prior to enrollment, the minister shall furnish the presbytery with evidence of having surrendered membership in all other Christian churches with which the minister has previously been associated (G-2.0505b).

(End of Article I)

ARTICLE II PRACTICE

Section 2.01: **Schedule of Meetings**

Meetings shall be held on the third Thursday of each month. The committee may meet in special session as needed. All actions taken by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall be reported at the next meeting of the presbytery.

Section 2.02: **Denominational Guidance**

All work of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall be in conformance with the *Book of Order*. While useful general guidance for the work of committees on preparation for ministry is provided in materials prepared by the *Office of the General Assembly*, no recommendation contained in those publication shall be contrary to the policies of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley.

(End of Article II)

(End of Committee on Preparation for Ministry Policy and Practice)

